



## Editorial

### Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology and Smart materials are current buzz words, not only in the scientific community (where they seem to feature in every research proposal seeking funding) but importantly in the political and industrial arenas too. I read of new inventions that will change our world nearly every day in the media. Everyone has heard of nanotechnology but most, I suspect do not understand what it is and what it can do to benefit our society. That is disappointing. Some have anxieties that nanoparticles can damage our health and the environment; whether that is true or not is currently being investigated and I am sure in those cases where nanoparticles are found to be harmful, it will be material specific. Most nanoparticles, I hazard a view, will be considered safe and beneficial to society.

There is no doubt that nanotechnology is a key technology for the future. Indeed, it is already a key technology in a host of applications, be it non-wetting or self cleaning surfaces, energy generation, electronic devices, pollution control and medical diagnostics and drug delivery to name but a few. With the emphasis on green technologies and large amounts of money continuing to be channelled into R & D, we can be sure that emerging nanoscience will translate into more commercial products aimed at improving the quality of life, conserving energy and preserving our environment.

Of course, we believe that gold has a special role to play in the 'nano' sector because of its unique attributes and aspects of this were clearly to be seen at the recent Nanotechnology conference in Boston where World Gold Council promoted the benefits of nanogold in a number of potential applications on its stand in the exhibition hall. No doubt, we shall hear more of nanogold technology and its applications next year at GOLD 2009 in Heidelberg, where the Call for Papers has just been announced (see page 223 and [www.gold2009.org](http://www.gold2009.org) for details). In my role as chairman of the organising committee, I look forward to a strong contribution from the gold nanotechnology sector, reflecting its key role in tomorrow's nano-oriented world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Corti". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

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*Editor*

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